

# PRESS RELEASE

## Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

Fourteenth District, Michigan  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus

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### **CONYERS CALLS ASHCROFT'S DECISION TO RECUSE HIMSELF IN CIA LEAK INVESTIGATION "TOO LITTLE TOO LATE"**

Rep. John Conyers, Jr. issued the following statement in connection with the decision by Attorney General Ashcroft to recuse himself from the investigation of the leak the name of the wife of Ambassador Wilson:

"I believe today's decision by the Attorney General to recuse himself from the CIA leak investigation constitutes a case of 'too little too late.'

It is too late because the action should have been taken months ago, when it was entirely obvious that the Attorney General investigating the White House presented a blatant conflict of interest. As a result of this delay, actions like the Department's giving the White House 11 hours notice before the investigation was officially started on September 30, can and should be called into question.

It is too little, because the Department has failed to appoint a Special Counsel as required by the Department's own regulations. 28 CFR Sec. 600. As respected as the U.S. Attorney who has had the case assigned to him, Patrick Fitzgerald, may be, he still works for the Attorney General and serves at his discretion. It would be far better to appoint an outside person with a 'reputation for integrity' as provided for in the Special Counsel rules. Appointment of a true Special Counsel would also mean that he or she would be free to seek whatever resources are necessary, and could only be fired for misconduct, dereliction of duty, incapacity, or other good cause. Both of these vital safeguards are missing when a simple recusal and delegation of authority is made.

Certainly, it is preferable that the Attorney General recuse himself than he remain in charge. But when we have an investigation of a leak which involves the White House concerning a matter that goes to the integrity of our foreign policy, the American people deserve the most independent review possible."

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